

Question for written answer E-001341/2025

to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Rule 144

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Subject: Violence against Coptic girls and women in Egypt

According to the non-governmental organisation Coptic Solidarity¹, Coptic girls and women in Egypt are the victims of a hidden epidemic. Coptic girls and women are often subjected to abduction, rape, forced marriage and forced conversion to Islam. Copts make up around 9 % of Egypt's population. Islam is Egypt's state religion, and Sharia is the country's principle source of legislation. Deadly attacks by Islamist mobs on Coptic Christians are not uncommon. Nor are attacks on churches. However, the violence suffered by Coptic girls and women is not widely known. According to Egyptian law, no one under 18 is permitted to marry. However, this law proves easy to circumvent. Moreover, marital rape is not recognised as such. Coptic girls and women can therefore be abducted, forced to marry, forced to convert to Islam and raped; they do not have any legal protection.

1. Is the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) aware of the reported violence against Coptic women and girls?
2. What is the VP/HR's political response to this, and is the protection of minorities, especially Copts, a priority in dialogue and diplomacy with Egypt?
3. How will the VP/HR urge the Egyptian Government to take all the measures necessary to end this violence against Coptic girls and women?

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¹ <https://www.copticsolidarity.org/2025/01/29/coptic-solidarity-publishes-revealing-report-on-early-forced-marriage-conversion-of-coptic-women-and-girls-in-egypt/>.